

COBURG CHILDREN'S CENTRE INC.

# PARENT MANUAL

In 2011 the Coburg Children's Centre had children from 29 different nationalities attending – among the staff team 9 different languages were spoken. The predominant language among the Centre's community is English. This manual is printed in English; however, much of the information can be downloaded from the internet in other languages. Our office staff can also provide printed information on a range of topics in many different languages, so please let us know if we can help you.

The Centre is funded to provide interpreting services by All Graduates ([www.allgraduates.com.au](http://www.allgraduates.com.au)). This provides language assistance for people with limited English. The Centre can use and/or issue the Interpreter Card and will arrange face to face, telephone or online interpreter services to assist families in translation of any information regarding the Centre. Further (language specific) information is available from the Victorian Multicultural Commission at [www.multicultural.vic.gov.au](http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au)

Updated November 2013:  
[www.multicultural.vic.gov.au](http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au),  
[www.allgraduates.com.au](http://www.allgraduates.com.au)

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November 2013

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# WELCOME

The Staff and Board of Management of the Coburg Children's Centre Inc. extend a warm welcome to you and your family.

We thank you for considering our centre when choosing care for your child.

We hope your time here will be happy and you experience the support, acceptance and understanding all families need when making the significant step from home care to child-care.

## CENTRE CO-ORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome. Please know I personally want each child and parent to feel happy, welcomed, accepted and safe at our Centre.

I have had the experience of leaving my daughter in a child-care centre. I remember feeling relieved at having found a “good” centre, but as a parent I was still highly anxious that staff may not understand my little girl’s needs and I carried a sadness that I was not with her.

My only assurance to you is that I will always strive to provide the understanding, care, support, and the learning experiences for you and your child I wanted and received for my daughter and myself.

I believe I have a responsible and skilled staff team who share my commitment to providing the highest achievable standard of professional care for the children in our Centre.

My door is always open and I am available to discuss any concerns, issues or questions you may have.

Please come and talk with me. I look forward to having your family involved in our Centre.

**Marlene Fraser**  
Centre Co-ordinator

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## 1.1 CENTRE HISTORY

The Coburg Children’s Centre opened in June 1977. It was the first government subsidised child-care centre in what was then the City of Coburg.

From 1977 to 1994 the Centre was owned and operated by the former Coburg City Council.

On the 1st July 1994 Council delegated the management of the Centre to a community-based Board of Management. A legal agreement was signed between the parties giving full management and financial responsibility to the Board with Council operating in a “sponsorship” capacity only. CCC became (and remains) CCCI – Coburg Children’s Centre Incorporated and we continue to have a legally binding Lease Agreement with Moreland City Council (MCC).

As our “sponsor” MCC provide free use of the building and some building maintenance support. However there is no direct ongoing financial assistance or support. The Centre is a stand-alone financially independent not for profit service.

## 1.2 CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy statement of the Coburg Children’s Centre Inc. is:

*Coburg Children’s Centre Inc. is a nurturing community  
made up of children, families and staff.*

*In our nature-based setting we value diversity, wellbeing,  
learning and development, environmental responsibility, and fun.*

This philosophy statement was written by a working party of parents and staff. Appendix I of this manual contains our full philosophy statement and sets out our beliefs about children, the learning outcomes we aim to achieve and the strategies staff use to implement our philosophy

Reading our full philosophy statement will give you a picture of how we carry out this philosophy in our day-to-day work with, and care of, your children.

The philosophy document is evaluated and modified, if necessary, by way of a review each year. All parents will be notified (via our newsletter) and invited to participate in this process.

### 1.3 THE CENTRE & OUR PEOPLE

Many staff have worked here for over 10 and up to 25 years and are now seeing the children who attended this Centre returning with their children. Longevity supports the sense of belonging and welcome we have cultivated into the soul of our Centre. This is so for all – children, families and staff.

Throughout our service is an ethos of acceptance, inclusion, and recognition of abilities. There is no place here for bias, inequality, exclusion, discrimination or stereotypical attitudes. This is supported by our philosophy, our Code of Conduct, Priority of Access policy, and our Centre community made up of children, families and staff from a diversity of cultures all of us with varying levels of ability. But most importantly it is supported by our attitude and our reputation within the community in which we take great pride.

**“Coburg Children’s Centre Inc. is a nurturing community made up of children, families and staff..... we value diversity”.**

**“The staff at this Centre will openly accept each family’s uniqueness” and**

**“Provide support for the family as a whole.”**

We embrace our philosophy and actively include it in our day to day work with our children, families and peers. Individuals who struggle with this are supported to rethink their decision to accept a position at this Centre. Further information about discrimination and inclusion can be found at:

[www.fka.com.au](http://www.fka.com.au), [www.noahsarkinc.org.au](http://www.noahsarkinc.org.au)

*Sourced November 2013*

### 1.4 THE CENTRE IN A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

The Coburg Children’s Centre believes fostering a positive attitude towards the environment should occur at an early age in order for a child to develop into an environmentally responsible and sensitive adult. We promote a holistic approach to environmental education at the early childhood level. This involves policy development, housekeeping practices, play experiences and strategies for working with children, staff and parents.

Our housekeeping systems, product purchasing (including food, equipment and supplies), and continuous educating of the children about the importance of caring for our planet are supported by the following “reduce, reuse, recycle, repair and refuse” practices we have introduced over the past 15 years:

- ⇒ Using “Tri Nature” products who manufacture environmentally responsible cleaning products made from natural based renewable ingredients and are readily biodegradeable
- ⇒ Using degradable bin liners made with Totally Degradable Plastic Additive (TDPA)
- ⇒ Using recycled paper for office printing and children’s play experiences

- ⇒ Printing this manual on 100% recycled office paper
- ⇒ Recycling all printer ink cartridges
- ⇒ Not accept the “replace is cheaper than repair” viewpoint and repair before replacing equipment
- ⇒ Having recycle bins for paper in the playrooms and office
- ⇒ Modelling and teaching children about recycling
- ⇒ Using material off cuts for bottom wipes and mop up cloths
- ⇒ Using harvested water on the garden and seasonally flush toilets
- ⇒ Actively modelling and teaching children to conserve water and use waste/run off water
- ⇒ Returning natural materials (leaves, gum nuts etc) used in the children’s play to the earth in its original state (no glues, pastes etc)
- ⇒ Minimizing the use of plastic play equipment and using improvised play equipment made from sustainable natural materials
- ⇒ Using cloth nappies
- ⇒ Using cloth hand towels in staff and children's bathrooms
- ⇒ Using paper bags to dispose of sanitary napkins
- ⇒ Using re-usable rubber gloves as an alternative to disposable gloves
- ⇒ Minimising use of the lighting, heating and cooling where possible
- ⇒ Encouraging use of handkerchiefs
- ⇒ Using tissues made from recycled paper
- ⇒ Involving children in planting vegetables and plants
- ⇒ Teaching children about our worm farm and actively involving them in the use of castings as fertiliser
- ⇒ As a first option choosing plants for the garden that are native, drought resistant and attract birds
- ⇒ Plan planting of trees in the garden for sustainability and shade into the future
- ⇒ Aiming to purchase non genetically modified food
- ⇒ Being active members of Environmental Education in Early Childhood Victoria.

We are concerned about the amount of chemical use in our world and the unknown potential long term effects on our children. “Multiple Chemical Sensitivity” continues to be researched and yet to be proven as a link to allergies –however- allergies have dramatically increased over the past decade. Everyday our society is trying to rectify the environmental problems that have created climate change and drought. Minimising our use of chemicals, plastic, waste of our precious resources, and teaching our children is our commitment to sustainability. For further information go to the Department of Health, Office of Chemical Safety at:

[www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-ocs.htm](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-ocs.htm)

*Sourced November 2013*

## 1.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

### CCCI PRIVACY AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The Coburg Children's Centre Inc. is bound by the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 which sets out principles concerning the collection and protection of personal information. The CCCI has developed a Privacy and Access Statement to summarise the Centre's obligations and family's rights in accordance with this Act. All Board of Management members, staff and students at the CCCI are bound by the Act and the following statement.

#### Personal Information

The CCCI collects personal information, including sensitive information about children and parents/guardians before and during the course of the children's enrolment at the Centre. The details collected directly from parents on children's enrolment forms have 3 purposes:

1. To meet the statutory legal requirements and obligations under the Children's Services Regulations and other laws governing or relating to the operation of the Centre.
2. To make up a personal profile of each child and family.
3. For the Centre to meet its duty of care.

In addition we are required to hold information regarding each family's Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR) entitlements.

#### How Personal Information is collected

A comprehensive Enrolment Form is completed for each child by their parents/guardians. Written or telephone contact by parents/guardians will notify the Centre of any changes to original enrolment details. It is vital that the information on hand is complete, accurate, and up to date and parents/guardians have a responsibility to ensure the Centre director or office administrator is provided with details of changes to the information held. Information may also be supplied to the Centre by a third party such as Centrelink, Department of Human Services etc. Only information that is necessary for the well being of the children and the Centres operations is collected.

#### Disclosure of Information

Where necessary:

- ⇒ personal and sensitive information which is collected is disclosed to staff to facilitate the best care for the child/ren.
- ⇒ personal and sensitive information is disclosed to relevant government and regulatory authorities and other organisations as required or authorised by law.
- ⇒ Students on work place training placements with a valid training requirement that involves the gathering of certain information pertaining to a child or family will be supplied with information in a manner that makes it unidentifiable.

#### Protection & Access

CCCI will take all reasonable steps to protect this information from misuse or loss and from unauthorised access or disclosure. Parents/guardians may access information collected about their child/ren subject to some exceptions specified by law.

*Reviewed November 2013*

*Developed as per the National Privacy Principles of the Federal Privacy Act*

## **1.6 CENTRE MANAGEMENT**

The Board of Management (up to 10+ members) comprises parents/guardians of the children attending the Centre, or any interested member of the community who is granted membership of the Association. This is a good way of learning about the actual workings of the Centre. Parents are encouraged to attend meetings throughout the year and consider standing for election to the Board at the Annual General Meeting in April.

The Board meets monthly for approximately one and a half hours. The Board are responsible for making major decisions about the management of the Centre, its finances, service delivery, and broad policy matters. The Board does not enter into fundraising activities or become involved in day to day administrative issues and the meeting agenda is confined to major management issues. Notice of meetings is prominently displayed on the front door prior to the meeting being held and minutes are displayed on the office door. Meetings are open to all parents and copies of the Centre's Policy documents, the executive Board members duties, the constitution, the legal agreement and meeting minutes are available to be read upon request.

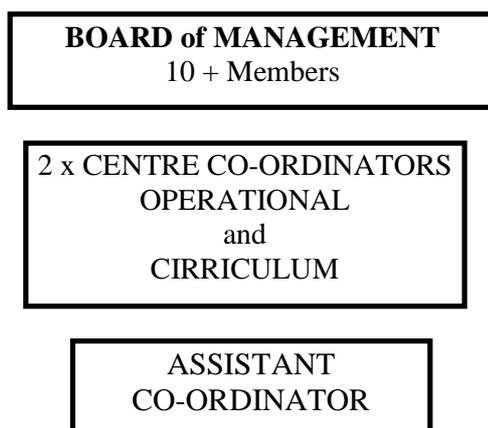
There are a number of questions you will have about how this service operates. This information manual has been put together to ensure you are well acquainted with the policies and procedures of our service. Please ask for clarification or further details.

The Board review this manual each year. Parents are notified of this review via the newsletter and are invited to have input into this process. Changes to policies are ratified by the Board of Management and issued to parents. Please talk to the Co-ordinator or one of the Board members - your input would be greatly appreciated.

## **1.7 HOURS OF OPERATION**

The Centre is open from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday to Friday. The Centre is closed on public holidays and from Christmas to the third week of January. Christmas closure dates vary slightly every year and parents will be notified of these dates in November.

## 1.8 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



JOEY ROOM	POSSUM ROOM	KOALA ROOM & KINDERGARTEN
Team Leader & 3 Team Members	Team Leader & 3 Team Members <i>Commencing July 2013 a 3 year old Kindergarten Program will operate 5 mornings per week during school term</i>	Team Leader & 2 Team Members Kindergarten Teacher
15 Children 0 up to 3 Years	27 Children From 2 to 4 Years	20 Children 4 + Years with 5 morning sessions of Kindergarten during school term Including Coburg Bush Kinder one morning per week

Each team leader has a minimum of two years formal Early Childhood training. Team Leader positions may change at the beginning of each year as most team members also have formal Early Childhood training. All staff have a minimum Certificate 111 in Childcare Studies. Casual staff are employed on an ongoing basis to replace permanent staff on rostered days off, planning days, paid leave etc. All staff have their photograph, name and position in the Centre, displayed in the hallway either in front of their room or in the foyer.

The Centre employs the following permanent staff:

- ⇒ an office administrator & support staff
- ⇒ a garden & minor maintenance team
- ⇒ cleaners
- ⇒ a qualified cook

Rarely the Centre engages the services of an agency staff member. On these occasions a regular staff member will be on duty each end of the day and available to parents.

The Board of Management engage the services of an Occupational Health and Safety consultant to ensure our service develops a systematic method of continuous monitoring and improvement to all matters related to the health, safety and well being of the Centre community.

## **1.9 STUDENTS & VOLUNTEERS**

Throughout the year Team Leaders take responsibility for supervising Early Childhood students on fieldwork placements from various colleges across Melbourne. Our staff have an excellent reputation for providing high levels of support to students. This generally results in positive experiences for all concerned – staff, students and children. When there is a student on placement in your child’s room you will see an identification poster with a photograph on the door to the room the student is working in.

The Centre does not engage the services of volunteers to provide care for the children however we often have specific purpose visitors who offer their skills to cook, sew, read etc with the children and this is most welcome. Section 4.1 of this manual has more details about this.

## **1.10 RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & PARENT LIBRARY**

A range of resource books and videos are on the Parent Library shelf at the Centre, all of which are able to be loaned out. If you would like information about a particular topic or want to peruse the books please talk with staff.

We can readily access information on a range of subjects, local support groups and resources available to families. Coburg Library also has an extensive “Parenting Library” including books and videos - this is an excellent resource. Moreland City Council’s online library catalogue may be viewed at:

[www.moreland.vic.gov.au/moreland-libraries.html](http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/moreland-libraries.html)

*Sourced November 2013*

Parents can access a number of resource workers via the Centre such as speech pathology, family support workers, maternal and child health nurses etc. We also make contact with specific support networks as needed eg. Diabetes Australia, the Asthma Foundation etc. This information is available to parents either from the reference library or via the Centre Co-ordinator.

Please talk with the staff about any resource materials, workers or groups that may be useful to you.

## **1.11 INFORMATION EVENINGS**

An information evening specific to children’s program planning is held at the Centre in the first part of each year. Information and/or sessions on other topics of interest e.g. asthma management, nutrition for pre-schoolers, behaviour and guidance, school readiness etc. will also be available to parents throughout the year. We would like to know what topics may be of most benefit to you so that we can work with the organisers of these sessions and/or pursue information that is most relevant to families. Please talk with us about your area of interest.

## **1.12 MANAGEMENT OF THE WAITING LIST**

Childcare places are allocated in line with the Centre's "Priority of Access" guidelines. In the first instance the Centre policy follows the Priority of Access guidelines set out by the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. After following these guidelines the Centre implements its internal priority process. This is well recorded and is available in the Centre's Policy document. Please see office staff if you would like a copy.

Information on the Departments guidelines can be sourced by downloading the CCMS Childcare Service Handbook 2012-2013 at:

[www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)

Child Care Services Handbook 2012-2013 Section 6 - Service Delivery

*Sourced November 2013*

## **1.13 THE CENTRE BUDGET**

You will see our Centre brochure promotes itself as the: "Coburg Children's Centre Inc – A service for families, not for profit".

Generally the Centre attains budget projections and "breaks even" each year. Any surplus is put into a "Centre Development Fund" and if a deficit were to occur we would have to write this into the next budget. Each November the Centre develops a budget which determines the fees for the coming year. The treasurer presents this to the Board for approval and parents are advised of the new fee scale (to be implemented the following January) before the Centre closes in December. The Board is very aware of the responsibility it has to ensure the Centre runs a break even budget and continues to remain in a sound financial position.

Fee increases are the least desirable option for the Board, but will be implemented at any time throughout the budget review process if deemed necessary.

## **1.14 THE CENTRE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Please see Appendix XVII for the Centre Policy and the procedure to follow if you have a complaint.

## SECTION 2 ATTENDING THE CENTRE

### 2.1 ENROLMENT INFORMATION

The Enrolment Form is quite detailed. We ask for much of this information to meet the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012 and to ensure families get their Family Assistance Office (FAO) entitlements for Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR). It is important we have all this information and you attach any further details that would be useful to us. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to inform us of any changes to address, telephone number, workplace, emergency contacts, medical details and immunisation status. Please inform office staff of any changes.

For further information about these regulations search Standard Enrolment Questions at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development:

[www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/licensed/enrolquest.pdf](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/licensed/enrolquest.pdf)  
<http://acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/>

*Sourced November 2013*

### 2.2 ORIENTATION PROCESS FOR NEW FAMILIES

Leaving your child in a child-care centre can be a highly anxious time for both parents and children. It is important that we set aside time for us to get to know and develop a trusting relationship with each other before you leave your child. When you do an initial tour of the Centre we will discuss some of the benefits and difficulties of introducing children to a group situation in their pre-school years. You will have time to talk with the tour leader and the staff of the room your child will be enrolled in. Each child is unique and there is no one "Simple Solution to Successful Separation". Some of the practical things you can do to make yourself and your children feel more secure are:

- ⇒ Complete your enrolment form at home and make a list of things you want staff to know. Each time you think of something - write it on the list.
- ⇒ Visit the Centre and stay with your child for one or two hours. You may do this as many times as necessary before the agreed commencement date.
- ⇒ Show your child that you trust the staff by talking to them about your child's needs/interests etc. Let your child see you doing this.
- ⇒ Talk with staff about when to leave and return. When you leave your child for the first time make it for a short period at the most interesting time of the day and when your child is rested and has the most energy. Spend some time with your child before you leave.
- ⇒ The doors and windows leading to each room are fitted with two-way glass to allow you to see your children without them seeing you. However- if they do catch a glimpse of you please go in and take them home – the message we want children to have is when mummy/daddy arrive we leave together.
- ⇒ When you return to the room after having left your child take your child home – it is confusing to come and go more than once in a day. Again - we want children to know that when their parents come back it is home time.

- ⇒ Gradually increase this time to include a lunch and sleep routine.
- ⇒ Staff have strategies to guide parents through this process and it is important to take your lead from them. Communication is vital – when children see parents and staff building trusting relationships they feel more secure when separating. Talk with staff to establish a routine for leaving and always tell your child you are going - a quick “bye bye mummy/daddy is going and we will come back” is good. This can be hard but we want our children to trust us and this often means being honest.
- ⇒ Try and keep the same routine so your child can predict who will bring them to the Centre and who will collect them. Predictability is very re-assuring for everyone.
- ⇒ If someone different is collecting your child you will need to inform staff (as per this manual 2.9 “Authority to Collect children from the Centre”) and we will tell your children who is coming. Please do not “surprise” them – it can create an unnecessary insecurity.
- ⇒ Ring the Centre as many times as you need to - we want you to feel reassured so please feel comfortable - we don’t mind how often you ring.

Staff will be available at the end of each day to spend some time with you to discuss your child’s day and any other issues or happenings that may be helpful for both of us to know.

We welcome you and your family and encourage you to bring extended family members to visit us and see your child’s Centre. Children love this and we do too. We are very happy if someone can come and share time with us. We are especially pleased when visitors contribute to our day by talking with the children or reading, knitting, cooking, gardening, telling stories, singing, bringing in pets, wearing a national costume or dress up talking about work etc. Staff will be eager to chat with you about this.

## 2.3 FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

If one word could describe our ultimate goal at CCCI it is the word inclusion. We welcome every child and do whatever we can to support each child and their family. This sometimes involves calling on other services to work alongside us.

Support Services for Children: There are many services we can access to help us do the best for our children. Their support comes in a variety of ways e.g. funding for additional staff, staff training, therapy, specialised equipment. The Federal Government funds the Inclusion and Professional Support Program specifically set up to help staff working with children with ongoing high support needs including children with disability.

Support Services for Families: At any one time several families from our Centre would be linked to a range of support networks and services. The co-ordinators have a great deal of information at their fingertips. If your family is struggling they are always willing to listen and help you to link up with the services that you consider can be of assistance in your particular circumstances.

[www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)

Child Care Services Handbook 2012-2013 Section 3 – Support for  
Childcare Services *Sourced November 2013*

## **2.4 WHAT ROOM WILL MY CHILD BE IN?**

With you we will come to a decision about the room your child should start in at our Centre. When making our recommendation about what room a child should be in we consider the following points first and foremost.

1. No one knows your child as well as you do – we do not see him or her at home, we only know what we see here.
2. Children – like adults, often behave very differently when (here) with their peers.
3. We do not ever want to place a child in an environment where they are socially or emotionally out of their depth – we want peer comfort rather than peer pressure.
4. Our aim is for every child to develop the resources and confidence to be a leader when they choose, or call leaders to account when necessary. This becomes increasingly important when children go to school.

If our recommendation is not what you expected or just simply not what you want please come and talk to us immediately.

## **2.5 WHEN WILL MY CHILD MOVE TO THE NEXT ROOM?**

It is not usual practice for us to move children from room to room mid year as this can be disruptive to the development of the group friendship process. Around November each year Team Leaders begin to discuss with their team the following 4 points:

1. Who does this child play with – what friendship group are they currently in?
2. How will this child cope with the “big fish” in the room they are moving to?
3. Is it best for this child to be the “little fish” in the big sea or should they have the opportunity to experience being a “big fish” in the little sea?
4. Where is this child’s social and emotional comfort zone?

Using these criteria, staff make recommendations about which room they think each child would be most suited to in the following year. A notice is sent to all parents asking them to come and discuss the recommendation with staff and together a decision is made. Children moving from the Joey Room would always have at least 1 staff member move with them. Children eligible to go to school the following year will be invited to meetings with the Kindergarten Teacher from June onwards to discuss their child’s school readiness and in November the “Transition to School Report” process is followed as per State Government requirements. For further information about Transition to School report go to:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/kindergarten/default.htm](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/kindergarten/default.htm)

*Sourced November 2013*

## 2.6 INFORMATION POCKETS

Each family/child has a “pocket” for internal notices. They are marked in alphabetical order of each child’s first name. The Joey’s pockets are located inside their room; the Koala and Possums’ pockets are located in the hallway. Siblings share one single pocket and may be either in the hallway or the Joey room.

Newsletters, notices, notes that let you know when there is new entry in your child’s portfolio, articles of interest and information on a range of topics will be left in your child’s pocket to bring you up-to-date with events, happenings, issues that are relevant to families. Weekly statements are sent each Monday by email but if this is not an option for you a hard copy will be left in your child’s pocket. It is important to read this as there is a “Weekly Bulletin” written on the bottom of the statement. Parents may use these pockets to leave notices, invitations, advertise (please check advertisements with the Co-ordinator first), and keep in touch with each other via our pocket system. Please check your pocket daily...

## 2.7 WHAT TO BRING

Before you bring anything to the Centre please label all your child’s belongings. Each child has a locker to help them keep their bag with all their bits and pieces together.

For children in nappies, a “home nappy” is needed - we use cloth nappies and a nappy wash service. All food is provided with the exception of baby formula. Please leave a large tin and we will make up the bottles each morning. We have all the facilities to manage expressed breast milk and/or formula – please talk to staff about the process you wish to use.

In line with our “Sun and Clothing Policy” (see Appendix III) all children need to be dressed in a way that protects them from the elements, particularly the sun.

Hats and T-shirts with sleeves and sunglasses for summer (the Centre provides a “bucket” style hat for every child and staff member) and coats and boots for winter. A spare set of clothes is essential.

[www.sunsmart.com.au/childcare\\_and\\_schools/in\\_early\\_childhood\\_services](http://www.sunsmart.com.au/childcare_and_schools/in_early_childhood_services)

*Sourced November 2013*

## 2.8 ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE PROCEDURE

To access the Centre enter the code you’ve been supplied with, into the key pad on brick the wall. When exiting, stand behind the metal strip separating the carpet and the mat, make sure the red sensor light is not showing above the door and press the green button on the brick wall.

It is a requirement of the Federal and State Governments that your child is signed in and out each day. A daily list is located outside your child’s room with several columns to be completed. Parents will receive a reminder notice in their information pocket if they forget to complete any part of this daily list. If your child’s name is not printed on the list there are blank spaces at the end of or over the page where you can add your child’s name.

[www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)

Child Care Services Handbook 2012-2013 Section 4 – Operating a Service

## **2.8 Continued.**

Always be sure to speak to a staff member when you are delivering your child to the Centre or taking them home. Children must never be left unaccompanied in a room, the hallway or any outside areas; this includes children not attending the Centre i.e siblings, friends, other children you may be caring for. There are couches in the hallway for “waiting” children or visitors. If your older child is waiting in the hallway or if you wish to leave a smaller baby while settling or collecting your child in/out of their room please ask office staff to supervise the waiting ones. It is a contravention of childcare regulations for any child to be left unsupervised in the Centre environment.

[www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/licensed/pn15delivercollect.pdf](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/licensed/pn15delivercollect.pdf)

## **2.9 AUTHORITY TO COLLECT CHILDREN FROM THE CENTRE**

On your child’s enrolment form you will be required to nominate two people who have the authority to collect your child from the Centre. If anyone other than the people specified on the form is to collect your child from the Centre we will require permission from you. It is important to always inform a staff member about who will be collecting your child. Children will not be allowed to leave the Centre with an unauthorised person unless prior permission has been given by parents. If any person arrives at the Centre under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or attempts to drive a motor vehicle while displaying impaired driving skills staff will request another person be called to collect the child. Relevant authorities may be called to assist.

There are very clear laws about custody and access. Natural parents, as stated on your child’s enrolment form, have legal access to the child unless a copy of relevant court orders stating otherwise is provided to the Centre. Further information on family relationship issues and post parent separation arrangements for children is available from:

*The Family Relationship Advice Line -Telephone 1800 050 321 and*  
[www.familyrelationships.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx)

*Sourced: November 2013*

## **2.10 LATE COLLECTION OF CHILDREN**

The Centre closes at 6:00pm. In the event that a child is still at the Centre at 6:30 p.m., and the parents have not contacted the Centre, the staff have a set procedure to follow. Please see Appendix V for the Policy and Procedure.

## **2.11 CHANGING YOUR BOOKING**

If your child attends the Centre part-time and you wish to temporarily or permanently change your booking please arrange this with the office staff. We make every effort to offer families flexibility. Two weeks notice of reducing care is required unless we have a family on our internal waiting list wanting to take up the day/s immediately.

## **2.12 CANCELLING CARE**

If you wish to reduce or cancel your childcare booking permanently two weeks notice or payment in lieu of this must be given. See Fees Policy and Procedure for further information.

## **2.13 ABSENCE FROM THE CENTRE**

If your child is going to be absent, please notify us as early as possible. Fees are paid for all absences however a system of “on-selling booked care” is in place (see **2.14**) Childcare benefit is available for up to 42 days of “Allowable Absences” per financial year. Once this number is exceeded FAO will not pay CCB for further absences until the 1st July when another 42 days are allocated to all families.

For further information download the CCMS Childcare Service Handbook 2012-2013:

[www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)

Child Care Services Handbook 2012-2013 Section 4 – Operating a Service  
– Sourced November 2013.

## **2.14 ONSELLING BOOKED CARE**

This is an internal system put in place to assist families wanting to temporarily sell unwanted or buy additional days of care. Formally adopted by the Board of Management the system aims to save parents money and to allow flexibility in buying extra care on an as needs basis. Management of the system is time consuming and requires constant attention by office staff. Please be clear about your needs as it adds to our workload and increases the potential for error when families continually change their arrangements. Conditions for using the system are as follows:

1. Families may offer days of booked care which they do not require, to be purchased by other families at the Centre.
2. Offering a booked day of care for sale is no guarantee that it will be sold. You are still liable to pay for the day until it is sold.
3. Days will be on-sold in the order in which the office is notified of their availability. E.g. first listed, first sold for any given day. Full day will be sold for full days unless by agreement with the seller to sell a morning or afternoon session of a full day.
4. Families may list requests for days of additional care. The office will notify you if the day becomes available to purchase.
5. Once you have agreed to purchase a day of care you will be:
  - a) contacted in person by email or telephone to confirm you have officially purchased the care
  - b) issued with a notification slip with a receipt number confirming the purchaseOnce a) and b) are completed you are liable to pay for that care.

## **2.14 Continued.**

6. Once you have made a formal request to sell a day of care you will be :
  - a) contacted in person by email or telephone to confirm you have officially purchased the care
  - b) issued with a notification slip with a receipt number confirming the care is soldOnce a) and b) are completed you have forfeited the care you will not be charged for it.
7. Days will not be held or reserved. Only official bookings as above reserves/sells care.
8. If you do not use a purchased day of care (e.g. the day is no longer needed or your child is absent due to being unwell) you will still be charged the full cost of the day.
9. If a purchased day is no longer needed it may be put up for resale.
10. Days of care may be listed for sale well in advance and on short notice up until 10am on the day of booked care. The more notice given the more likely it is that the day will be sold.
11. Families requiring care are able to phone on the morning of the day required.
12. Maximum numbers of children apply to each room in the centre, even if the overall number has not been reached. This may mean that an available day is not able to be sold. For example a family wishing to purchase a day of care in the Koala room may not be able to purchase an available day if the Koala room is full on that day.

### 3.1 PAYMENT OF FEES

As stated on the front of our brochure:

*Coburg Childrens Centre Inc. – A service run for families, not for profit*

This makes the budget for CCCI very simple. We do not make a profit and so we must make sure that the total amount of money coming in equals the total amount of money going out. 95% of our income is from fees. 84% of our spending is on salaries and 5% on food. There is no room to move so we have to be very tough about the payment of fees by parents. We must receive all of the fees all of the time to keep our Centre operating.

In conjunction with the following please read Appendix VI “Fees Policy and Procedure” The fee structure is on display on the office door. Copies are available on request.

1. Weekly accounts are provided and payment by any of the following options is available:
  - Internet banking - this can be organised with the office staff. Please be sure to include the reference number allocated or your name in all transactions - it is difficult and costly to track unidentified payments.
  - Automatic deductions from parents pay sent to us by the pay office via the internet
  - Automatic deduction from a credit card where parents supply us with credit card details which we automatically process on Friday weekly, fortnightly or on a negotiated date.
  - Cash – must be paid in person to office staff only
  - Cheques may be made payable to “Coburg Children’s Centre Inc.”
2. Fees can be paid in person or over the telephone any time during business hours
3. Fees must not be in arrears for more than two weeks. The Centres financial year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December and fees must be paid in full before the Centre closes in December. Fees cannot be carried over into the Centre’s new financial year. More information can be found in the Fees Policy - Appendix VI.
4. Fees are payable for all absences due to illness, annual leave, rostered days off etc. unless your day has been sold via the Onselling Booked Care System (see **2.14**). There is no charge for public holidays, no “extra” fees or levies for additional services, and no fundraising. Our fees include the cost of all food, nappies, kindergarten sessions, excursions, costs for performances for the children etc.
5. Fees are not charged during the Christmas/New Year close down. To secure your child’s place for the coming year families returning to the Centre will pay for booked care when the Centre re-opens in January. However - in January only - if parents give a minimum of 24 hours notice that their child will be absent no fees are charged. Existing and new families will pay for their booked care as from the Monday after the Australia Day public holiday.

### 3.2 CHILD CARE BENEFIT (CCB) and CHILD CARE REBATE (CCR)

Childcare Benefit (CCB) is a payment made by the Australian Government to families to assist with the cost of childcare. In addition to CCB families are eligible to claim Childcare Rebate (CCR) which is a further entitlement of up to 50% rebate for their out of pocket childcare fees expenses.

All families are encouraged to contact the Family Assistance Office, located at Centrelink Customer Service Centres and Medicare Australia shop fronts or by using [online services](#) to obtain a Customer Reference Number (CRN) prior to using childcare. The FAO will process your claim and send you a letter with your CRN. Please provide us with all your CRNs - both parents and those of each child being enrolled. All details must be exactly as you have provided to the FAO i.e. spelling of names dates of birth and same surnames. We submit this information to Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) who then link you, our Centre, Centrelink and the Family Assistance Office.

There are two options available to parents when claiming the CCB entitlement. It may be sent directly to the Centre and used to reduce the cost of your weekly fee or it may be claimed as a lump sum through FAO after you have lodged your tax return at the end of the financial year.

There are three options available when claiming CCR. It may be sent directly to the Centre and used to reduce the cost of your weekly fee or it may be claimed as a lump sum through FAO or paid directly to you weekly, fortnightly every three months or annually.

All CCB and CCR payments are reconciled by the Australian Tax Office after you have lodged your tax return at the end of the financial year. If parents incorrectly estimate their income and CCB or CCR is over or under paid the adjusted amount will be recovered or reimbursed.

**NOTE: Applications assessed by FAO to determine your entitlements can only be back dated 28 days – please contact FAO promptly**

To apply to the FAO for CCB and CCR parents can call Monday to Friday 8am and 8pm:

Telephone:	13 61 50
TTY	1800 810 586
Languages other than English:	13 12 02

Brochures about Centrelink service options are available from the office. Information regarding eligibility and what to do to claim CCB and CCR can be found at:

[www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)  
[www.humanservices.gov.au/](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/)  
[www.mychild.gov.au/childcarerebate/default.aspx](http://www.mychild.gov.au/childcarerebate/default.aspx)  
[www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)

Child Care Services Handbook 2012-2013 Section 9 – Reporting Enrolment Information  
– Sourced November 2013.

## SECTION 4 DAILY ROUTINES

### 4.1 CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

#### What is it?

Parents sometimes ask "Do the children just play all day?" As per our Philosophy Statement *children's confidence in their ability to learn comes when they are actively and purposefully involved in play.*

Staff develop a planned program of play experiences and document examples of children's developing knowledge, interests, skills and attitudes. The documentation that makes up the program is displayed for parents to read, question and contribute to.

#### How is the program planned?

At the beginning of the year staff plan very generally. Their priority is to get routine times e.g. snacks, lunch, sleep and transitions running in a smooth and predictable way, and to help children get to know and feel confident in their environment. This is still relevant for children who have more than 1 year in the same room. Staff and children develop a close relationship during this time. From March documentation becomes more specific:

1. A Reflections Folder documents the group program in each room. This may include photographs, samples of work, conversations and observations, spontaneous and planned experiences. Each room's Reflections Folder is permanently displayed. The Folder is updated during planning time.
2. Individual Portfolios document interests, strengths and achievements and are permanently available for parents to look at their (own) child's folio. Information input varies according to each child's attendance. Portfolios are given to each family for 2 weeks mid year to read at home and at the end of the year to keep.
3. A Wall Chart documenting examples of the emergent curriculum and intentional teaching

Note: Parents are directed to comply with the Boards request that they do not look at another child's portfolio unless that child's parent is present at the time and in agreement. Breaches of this request will be resolved as per the Centres Code of Conduct (Appendix II).

Throughout the year staff document information about your child's interests, friendships and emerging development and this is incorporated into the daily program.

Each room team has a minimum one day per fortnight dedicated planning time to add to children's portfolios, update the Reflections Folder and gather materials and resources. Documenting the group and the individual reminds us that:

- a) each child is a unique personality with an individual pattern and timing of growth and development and
- b) that the group setting has a significant role to play in children's learning and development

Each year the planning process is further developed and refined based on information from the field including research, professional development, field visits etc.

### **Types of Experiences**

You will see a balance of play experiences including - active/quiet; indoor/outdoor; structured/unstructured; clean/messy; wet/dry, with both group and individual participation opportunities offered. It will include language and literature, music and movement, art, dramatic and imaginative, science and mathematics, sensory and physical play opportunities. Most of these experiences are presented in a way that encourages children to use their own ideas and imagination – referred to as “open-ended” play experiences. These do not necessarily focus on an end product (e.g. 25 blossom trees all exactly the same) but rather on the process of learning by doing.

Our Centre Philosophy and documentation are interpreted in the context of the Victorian Governments “Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework” (VEYLDF) framework. To find out more go to:

[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/earlyyears/veylf\\_for\\_children\\_from\\_birth\\_to\\_8.pdf](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/earlyyears/veylf_for_children_from_birth_to_8.pdf)

*Sourced November 2013*

### **Parent Involvement**

It is important for staff to let parents know about the program and how your family can contribute. We aim to do this by:

1. Displaying the Reflections Folder and the children’s portfolios.
2. Being available at the end of the day to discuss children’s progress.
3. Making specific time with parents as needed or requested – especially for those with children going to school the following year.
4. Inviting parents to contribute to the program through the family portfolio page throughout the year particularly when we have made a new entry.

Once again we reiterate our philosophy of welcome to you and your family and encourage you to bring extended family members to visit us and see your child’s Centre and how the program operates. We appreciate it if you or a family member can come and share time with us and contribute to our program by talking with the children or reading, speaking another language, teaching a song, playing a musical instrument, knitting, cooking, gardening, telling stories, bringing in pets, wearing a national costume or dress up talking about work, family, the environment or the weather etc. Staff want to incorporate positive learning opportunities from our community into our children’s day. What may seem to families a small input can create a lifelong positive memory for a child.

## 4.2 BEHAVIOUR & GUIDANCE

Effective behaviour guidance is positive and consistent. Children can present with challenging behaviour that often leaves adults feeling at a loss to know how to manage. Here are some basic techniques staff practise and may be useful for parents when guiding children's behaviour:

- ⇒ Be realistic in the limits set - are they appropriate to the child's age/stage and level of understanding?
- ⇒ Make rules/limits about things that matter i.e. potential danger, harmful or unjust issues etc. Be consistent - the rules are the rules! Keep them the same, changing them creates confusion for everyone.
- ⇒ Allow children to own and experience the consequences of their inappropriate behaviour - this is generally a far more useful lesson than punishment.
- ⇒ Understand that children will have their own view of situations that may differ from our view. Give clear simple explanations about why some behaviours are unacceptable and suggest/negotiate a positive alternative.

In line with our philosophy, staff use positive guidance techniques such as:

**Anticipation** - We plan to set the environment in a way that reduces inappropriate behaviour. We also look for potential "trouble spots" and "de-activate" situations before they develop into unacceptable behaviour.

**Redirect/Distract/Ignore** - Giving children a short break from the situation directly and or indirectly encourages children to focus on positive actions and responses and if appropriate ignore unacceptable behaviour.

**Positive Feed Back** - We actively acknowledge, value and appreciate children's positive and appropriate behaviour.

**Encouragement** - We encourage children to behave in a way that makes them feel good about themselves and helps to develop a self concept that they know how to conduct themselves properly.

**Social Justice** - Staff use daily situations to teach children to understand the feelings and emotions they and others experience. Through active modelling and guidance they offer children practical tools to support, care for and respect each other with an aim to create peace and harmony for individuals and the group. We assist children to learn appropriate behaviour and begin to understand social justice by applying these basic rules and techniques.

In the event of significant concern around a child's behaviour, either by parents or the staff, a plan of action is required. Staff will work with parents to achieve this.

We are available to discuss children's behaviour - whether they are issues at the Centre or at home. Please come and talk with us anytime – most of us are parents first and foremost and we often speak from a personal as well as a professional perspective.

Source November 2013: [www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au)  
[www.rch.org.au/ccch/profdev.cfm?doc\\_id=11177](http://www.rch.org.au/ccch/profdev.cfm?doc_id=11177)

### **4.3 RECOMMENDED CLOTHING**

We encourage parents to dress children in a way that protects them from accidents, the elements, and ensures ease of dressing. A specific Sun and Clothing Policy and Procedure is included in Appendix III that deals with protection from the sun. Other things to consider are the hazards of thongs (stubbed toes), long skirts (when running and climbing), overalls (when needing to go to the toilet in a hurry!). We dress for comfort and not for style - please dress your child in a way that makes play easy and comfortable and taking clothes on and off a far less frustrating task for them and us.

### **4.4 NUTRITION**

A copy of the Nutrition Philosophy & Policy is included as Appendix VII. A six-week seasonal menu is on display in the hallway for the Koala and Possum children and a separate/specific menu is on display in the Joey room. The Centre is classified as a “Class A” Food Premises as per the Food Act 1984 and is fully compliant with all aspects of the Act. A copy of the Centres Food Plan is kept in the office. We aim to serve food that is fresh, local, seasonal, inviting, has travelled minimum food miles and has not been Genetically Modified. Lunch times vary according to the children’s and the rooms needs - please talk with staff about what time your child has lunch. The Centre cook (Alex) is available from 7am to 1p.m. daily. Please visit or telephone if you would like to talk with him.

### **4.5 BIRTHDAYS**

We enjoy celebrating your child’s birthday. You may wish to bring a birthday cake to share with your child’s group. In doing so please keep in mind we have many children on very specific diets due to allergies. Several of these can go into anaphylactic shock if they eat certain food. Please give staff a list of the ingredients in your child’s cake – particularly eggs and flour. Never use or bring nuts or food containing traces of nuts of any description to the centre – this could prove fatal for some children. We ask that lollies and other “sweet treats” be kept for the home party and not brought to the Centre. This avoids the conflict and minimises the risk to those children who have allergies. It is also in line with our Nutrition Policy which aims to teach children to target healthy eating.

A further note on birthdays: Birthdays are special days and staff like to celebrate with the children here at the Centre. Often children invite staff to their “home” party. Generally staff choose not to attend as it creates a ripple effect and all children want staff to come to their home party. Children find it difficult to understand why staff may go to one child’s party and give a present and then not go to theirs. We could potentially be at a birthday party every weekend with 120+ children enrolled at the Centre throughout the year. We ask you to help us explain to your child that they have their birthday party at the Centre with their friends and teachers and the home party is for friends and family.

## 4.6 REST TIME & SLEEPING POSITION

All children are encouraged to rest after lunch each day, infants rest time will vary according to needs. Whilst sleeping is not necessary, resting the mind and body with some quiet private time is: for example sitting quietly on a mat with a book. Staff will often give older children the option to use this time to make entries into their own personal individual drawing journals. Please talk with staff about the level of rest/sleep you want your child to have throughout the day.

Some sleeping arrangements are not safe and can increase the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Infants who are accustomed to sleeping on their stomachs are at increased risk of SIDS. We insist parents discuss their infants sleeping position with staff and come to an arrangement that is consistent with the Centres policy about sleep positions for infants. In line with the latest “Reducing the Risk of SIDS Program” staff will adhere to the following policy:

Coburg Children’s Centre staff will:

- ⇒ put all babies and young children on their back to sleep – not on their tummy or side
- ⇒ sleep all babies and young children with their faces uncovered (no doonas, pillows, lambs wool, bumpers or soft toys, hats or bonnets)
- ⇒ Provide a safe sleeping environment (safe cot, safe mattress, safe bedding)
- ⇒ put babies feet at the bottom of the cot
- ⇒ tuck in bed clothes securely so bedding is not loose
- ⇒ ensure quilts, doonas, bumpers, duvets, pillows etc are not in the cot.

Parents must discuss their child’s sleeping arrangements with staff particularly when their child’s home sleep position is different to what we will be following here.

Further information about safe sleeping can be found at:

<http://www.sidsandkidsvic.org/>

<http://www.kidsafevic.com.au/>

<http://www.productsafety.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/975000>

Sourced November 2013

## 4.7 TOYS FROM HOME

Children often feel a need to bring toys from home. We understand this need and we recognise the difficulties it presents. However we ask that you encourage your child not to bring their home toys. Comfort and security toys/rugs etc. are an exception to this request. Infants in particular need to have something that looks, smells and feels familiar to them.

Please understand that we cannot be responsible for the care of home toys. Children can be devastated if their toys are broken or lost and staff find it almost impossible to keep track of home toys. We ask that toys that are particularly attractive (and vulnerable) e.g. special Barbie dolls, Thomas Tank, Ben 10 toys etc. are left at home. Sometimes a special request may be sent out by staff requesting the “Toy of the Year” be left at home and this could include clothing. Often “Hero Clothing” eg. T/shirts, hats, capes, shoes etc encourage a level of unacceptable negative play and this may incur temporary limitations or bans.

## **5.1 HYGIENE**

Staff promote, practise, provide a model for and encourage children to develop, sound personal and general hygiene procedures that assist in reducing the spread of germs and infection. Infections can be spread by a person who shows no sign of illness. Effective hand washing techniques are a crucial component in preventing the spread of cross infection and disease particularly when handling bodily fluids e.g. nappy changing, nose wiping, cleaning up blood and vomit. All staff are trained in workplace first aid and food handling and know how to manage these situations in a safe and hygienic manner. A written nappy changing routine is displayed in nappy changing areas and posters illustrating effective hand washing techniques are displayed around the Centre.

For more information about hygiene and childhood illness see the National Health and Medical Research Council website at:

[www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf).

*Sourced November 2013*

## **5.2 CLEANING & CHEMICALS**

We have a responsibility to teach our children from a young age to take positive actions for the environment and our work with the children includes a sound environmental influence. We use cleaning products purchased from “Tri Nature” a wholly Australian owned company who manufacture environmentally responsible cleaning products made from natural based renewable ingredients and are readily bio-degradable. Tri Nature is registered as cruelty free and their chemicals do not contain any bleaches, chlorine, petrochemicals or formaldehyde.

Their philosophy statement includes the following:

“In the name of our children and our children’s children, we will manufacture products that will not harm our environment”

Part of practising the values we teach our children includes the decision to use environmentally aware, safe, effective cleaning products. Further information about Tri Nature chemicals can be seen on their website at:

<http://www.trinature.com/> or telephone 9646 4992, *Sourced November 2013*

### **5.3 ILLNESS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

When children have a cold are teething or are just generally unwell, staff will plan appropriately for their needs e.g. sitting quietly, sleeping etc. If your child's condition worsens throughout the day we may ask you to collect them early. To the best of our ability we will endeavour to care for children who are unwell due to illness for prolonged periods.

If a child has an infectious illness or disease e.g. conjunctivitis or chicken pox they must be excluded from the Centre as per the Human Services Centre for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts "Minimum Period of Exclusion from Schools and Children's Services" Schedule (see Exclusion Policy - Appendix XII and Schedule Appendix XIII).

It is your responsibility to notify the Centre if your child has contracted an infectious disease or illness. If your child has an infectious illness that is not included in the Guidelines, the Co-ordinator may require you to have your child seen by a doctor for a clearance stating that the child is not infectious.

[www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf)  
[www.health.vic.gov.au/ideas](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/ideas)

*Sourced November 2013*

### **5.4 OUTDOOR PLAY**

Our daily routine involves outdoor play, including winter. Please understand that it is almost impossible to keep children inside all day - particularly when all their friends are outside. They want to be out there with them! Generally speaking, your child is not well enough to attend the Centre if they are unable to go outside during the winter months on an ongoing basis. If, in the short term, you want your child to stay inside this can be negotiated with your child and staff.

An outdoor curfew is set in the winter months and staff will be able to inform you of the time children will be brought back inside in the afternoon. Particular attention and consideration is given to those children suffering from asthma, croup, and upper respiratory infections. Summer curfew also applies and – see Appendix III "Sun and Clothing Policy and Procedure" for further details.

### **5.5 MEDICATION**

If your child requires any medication while attending the Centre we have policies and procedures you need to be aware of. If your child requires medication to be administered during the day it is your responsibility to complete the required information in the medication book, verbally inform, and hand the medication that is to be administered to a staff member. Our policy clearly outlines the procedures for both parents and staff. It is important that you read and understand this. Please see the Appendix VIII for the Medication Policy and Procedure.

## 5.6 ACCIDENTS

If a child has an accident while attending the Centre and staff are concerned for the child's well being, parents will be notified. All staff are qualified in first aid and hold a current First Aid Certificate.

Please see the Appendix IX for the Accident Procedure.

## 5.7 EMERGENCIES

If your child is seriously injured or becomes extremely ill while attending the Centre, staff have a clear set of procedures to follow. Please see Appendix X for the Emergency Procedure.

## 5.8 CHILDREN WHO BECOME ILL DURING THE DAY

If your child becomes ill during the day staff will notify you. This highlights the importance of having up-to-date information on each child's enrolment form. Please see Appendix XI for the Policy & Procedures staff follow.

## 5.9 IMMUNISATION

Part of your child's enrolment form is a green sheet for you to complete about your child's immunisation status. If your child is not immunised a copy of an Immunisation Exemption Conscientious Objection Form from your Health Care Provider will need to be provided. It is important that you keep these records up-to-date to enable us to protect your child against diseases she/he may not have been immunised against. Please see Appendix XV for a copy of the Vaccination Schedule. When an infectious disease is present or suspected at the Centre (or at home involving another sibling), and a child has not been immunised against this disease (as per the Centrelink immunisation requirements) then any children or staff who have not been immunised will need to be excluded temporarily from the Centre. Please see Appendix XIV for the Immunisation Policy. We are not able to arrange vaccinations for children, however parents themselves can organise for Council Health Department staff to vaccinate a child at the Centre. Immunisation schedules and session details in all languages are available from the office.

Source: [www.moreland.vic.gov.au/health-safety-and-wellbeing/immunisation-moreland.html](http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/health-safety-and-wellbeing/immunisation-moreland.html)

Source: [www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf).

*Infectious Diseases 4<sup>th</sup> Ed*

Source: [www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)

*Sourced November 2013.*

## 5.10 DENTAL HEALTH

Establishing good dental health practices at an early age is vital to children's oral and overall health. As part of the Centres Nutrition Policy (See Appendix VII) children rinse their mouths with a drink of water as an alternative to brushing their teeth after eating. Dental Health Services Victoria has a state-wide Pre School Dental program. In Moreland this operates out of the Brunswick Community Health Centre located at 11 Glenlyon Road Brunswick and all parents are eligible to access this service. Parents can have their child's teeth fully examined and the subsequent "course of care" treatment relating to this examination for a maximum cost of \$30.50 (free for families on a healthcare card). For further information about this program visit the website or to make an appointment contact the centre on 9387-6711.

Sourced November 2013 [www.merrichs.org.au/Pages/Dental.aspx](http://www.merrichs.org.au/Pages/Dental.aspx)

## 5.11 INCURSIONS/EXCURSIONS POLICY

Throughout the year, staff will incorporate into the program visits from pet care people, community services, artists, entertainers and exhibitions/performances etc. to stimulate and encourage children's curiosity, creativity and connectedness to their community.

The 4 year old kindergarten program takes the children in small groups on routine excursions to places near the Centre e.g. the library, market, park, shops, council offices etc. These excursions are within walking distance, and are to do or see something of interest and relevance to the program. This includes our weekly Bush Kinder Program. Parents with children in this room are asked to sign a single form providing consent for their kindergarten child to go on routine excursions outside the Centre throughout the coming year.

When going on an excursion which falls outside the realm of "routine excursions" and transport of any description is involved further parent/guardian written consent is required. Details of the date, the destination and proposed activity, the reason for the excursion, the method of transport, the period of time the child will be away from the Centre and the number of staff and/or other responsible persons to accompany and supervise the children will be given in writing to parents.

Staff members on an excursion will take a basic first aid kit and details of the telephone number of persons who are to be notified of any accident, injury, trauma or illness involving a child and a child's doctor or medical service.

Source: November 2013

<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/licensed/pn14excursions.pdf>

## 5.12 PROVIDING A CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Ensuring each child's safety is our primary concern. Child safety covers a multitude of areas. Staff and management implement systems to actively address safety issues at the Centre and promote safety awareness for families. To ensure a child safe environment we will:

- ⇒ Comply with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012
- ⇒ Comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- ⇒ Comply with the Food Act 1984
- ⇒ Have the Centre fully inspected monthly by a licensed pest control company
- ⇒ Ensure safe storage of and disposal of medications, cleaning products, chemicals, fouled linen, sharps objects, dangerous items
- ⇒ Ensure all cleaning products and chemicals on site have Material Safety Data Sheets. These along with dangerous items will be stored in non child accessible areas, such as:
  1. Stored in the locked outdoor non child accessible shed
  2. Stored in the locked laundry or in the locked cupboard in the locked laundry
  3. Stored in the locked switch room
  4. Stored in the locked cupboard in the kitchen
- ⇒ Have (minimum) one fully trained OH&S Rep. in the staff team at all times
- ⇒ Engage the services of an OH&S consultant on an ongoing basis
- ⇒ Keep updated hazards analysis, risk assessment and risk control plans
- ⇒ Ensure staff know and promptly implement procedures for repairing or replacing broken equipment and having building maintenance issues attended to promptly
- ⇒ Store all medications in non child accessible areas, in either the kitchen refrigerator or the medication cabinet in the child's room or the office
- ⇒ Conduct a daily indoor and outdoor environment safety check by staff while preparing children's play experiences
- ⇒ Keep a register of dangerous and poisonous plants and ensure they are not at the Centre
- ⇒ Ensure thorough orientation process for all staff
- ⇒ Ensure staff know and are able to carry out all Centre procedures related to the safety and well being of the children
- ⇒ Work within the Centre philosophy to:
  - Model and encourage non-aggressive strategies for conflict resolution.
  - Develop in children strength and assertiveness that will serve them in situations that may jeopardise their personal safety, and
  - Respond to situations where a child needs comfort, first aid, support, reassurance and affection in a warm, nurturing and professional manner.
- ⇒ Ensure senior key staff know the signs of child abuse and neglect and the Centre's documented procedure for taking action on suspected child abuse
- ⇒ Ensure staff actively supervise children at all times
- ⇒ Set the environment so that it directly/indirectly minimises the potential for accidents, conflict, or requirement for a level of adult supervision that cannot be maintained
- ⇒ Have agreed staff supervision visibility positions and levels of staffing in specific areas
- ⇒ Be continuously active by directly and indirectly guiding children on modes of acceptable participation within specific play areas
- ⇒ Ensure staff communicate with each other when there is a change in the level of staffing or potential supervision
- ⇒ Organise the staff roster to ensure continuity of staff personnel and levels
- ⇒ Budget for and ensure training is organised for staff to renew and keep current first aid, food handlers, CPR, asthma and anaphylaxis training to maintain recommended levels

- ⇒ Include and pay staff to attend staff meetings and staff training
- ⇒ Include key room staff in the planning process
- ⇒ Ensure a thorough recruitment and selection process for all permanent staff

For further information about providing a safe environment go to [www.justice.vic.gov.au](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au) & [www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au) & [www.napcan.org.au](http://www.napcan.org.au) & [www.rch.org.au](http://www.rch.org.au)

*Sourced November 2013*

### **5.13 ALLERGIES, ANAPHYLAXIS & ASTHMA MANAGEMENT**

On your child's enrolment form you are asked to inform us of any allergies, sensitivities medical conditions or food intolerances your child may have. Children with a diagnosed condition must provide a management plan outlining the nature, reaction identification and first aid details required to treat the condition. Medication must also be supplied. This plan will be photocopied and displayed for all staff. A laminated copy will be kept in each room, the staff room and kitchen where a full list of every enrolled child with food allergies/intolerances is also kept. This action plan will be followed and if symptoms accelerate an ambulance will be called. Individual children's anaphylaxis kits are kept on top of the medication cabinet in their room and an asthma management kit and spare epipen is kept in office. Each room team has at least one staff member trained to administer these medications. Individual children's dietary requirements are able to be catered for however in some instances we may request parents supply specific foods. Constant communication is the key to minimising the risks associated with these conditions and parents are asked to continuously keep staff informed of any changes to their child's conditions.

This highlights the importance of two major issues for all parents to consider:

1. The harm that can be caused to other children when parents bring food into the Centre – just having skin contact with someone who has traces of a food or substance that a child who has anaphylactic reactions to could produce a significant reaction or, at worst, prove fatal.
2. The value of having current Ambulance Subscription.

Any food brought to the Centre must be handed directly to a staff member – please never leave food or other substances in your child's bag – an innocent package of food, play-dough or other such substances to share with friends could cause an unnecessary crisis.

Further information can be found at:

[www.allergy.org.au](http://www.allergy.org.au) & [www.rch.org.au](http://www.rch.org.au) & [www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au) & [www.asthma.org.au](http://www.asthma.org.au)

*Sourced November 2013*

#### **5.14 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN**

The Centre has a comprehensive emergency evacuation procedure which is rehearsed and practised with the children each month. Evacuation procedures are displayed throughout the Centre and a copy of the Plan is included in Appendix XVI.

The Evacuation and Emergency Plan has been reviewed to ensure compliance with the new Dept of Education and Early Childhood Development Emergency Management Guidelines. In March 2012 our completed plan was submitted to DEECD for scrutiny and was subsequently approved.

#### **5.15 MANDATORY REPORTING**

Please see Appendix XVIII for the procedure to be followed by staff if child-abuse is suspected.

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**PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

Coburg Children’s Centre Inc. is a nurturing community  
made up of children, families and staff.

In our nature-based setting we value diversity, wellbeing,  
learning and development, environmental responsibility, and fun.

Beliefs – our beliefs about children are encapsulated in these words:

**COMMUNICATION**

Children are active communicators.  
They give and receive information in different ways.

**IDENTITY**

Children have a developing sense of identity.  
This reflects their inner and outer worlds.

**WELLBEING**

Children’s wellbeing is fundamental to their happiness.  
This is a reflection of the physical, social and emotional aspects of their lives and the values at the  
essence of their being.

**COMMUNITY**

Children are a vital and valued part of the community.  
Community includes people, places and culture which starts in the family household, extending to the  
local environment and wider world.

**LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Children’s learning and development is an individual process.  
Children’s confidence in their ability to learn comes when they are actively and purposefully involved  
in play.

Learning Outcomes from the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework:

- 1) **Identity:** Children have a strong sense of identity.
- 2) **Community:** Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
- 3) **Wellbeing:** Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
- 4) **Learning:** Children are confident and involved learners
- 5) **Communication:** Children are effective communicators.

**Linking our Beliefs with these Learning Outcomes, in daily practice, the staff at this Centre will:**

**As educators and carers of the children:**

- ⇒ Structure the program so that it offers choice, flexibility and meets a range of emotional needs
- ⇒ Use positive guidance techniques
- ⇒ Use open-ended materials.
- ⇒ Offer or modify the same experiences on a regular basis to build confidence in skills.
- ⇒ Allow, encourage, and value children's contributions to daily routines.
- ⇒ Practise active listening techniques e.g.:
  - get down to the children's level
  - make eye contact
  - paraphrase in conversation
  - modify language to match the child's level of comprehension
- ⇒ Provide a balance of fine and gross motor experiences.
- ⇒ Value outdoor play as a learning environment in its own right.
- ⇒ Provide a balance of familiar and challenging experiences.
- ⇒ Provide opportunities to explore, test, question and reason.
- ⇒ Allow children to work at their own pace.
- ⇒ Provide a range of solitary and small group experiences.
- ⇒ Use positive guidance techniques such as anticipation, redirection, positive feedback and encouragement.
- ⇒ Model desired behaviour throughout all aspects of the program.
- ⇒ Encourage a shared mode of decision-making, problem-solving and co-operation including scaffolding.
- ⇒ Model and encourage non-aggressive strategies for conflict resolution.
- ⇒ Develop in children strength and assertiveness that will serve them in situations that may jeopardise their personal safety.
- ⇒ Respond to situations where a child needs comfort, first aid, support, reassurance and affection in a warm, nurturing and professional manner.
- ⇒ Acknowledge each child's presence in the Centre.
- ⇒ Follow up children's ideas and interests through a variety of media (books, posters, open-ended play materials).
- ⇒ Allow children to make choices from a range of acceptable options.
- ⇒ Provide time for children to complete routine tasks and work through play sequences.

**As care sharers with parents, the staff at this Centre will:**

- ⇒ Openly accept each family's uniqueness.
- ⇒ Share knowledge and information with the parents about their child each day.
- ⇒ Provide parents with written and verbal information about programs, the rules of the room and the guidance techniques used by staff.
- ⇒ Consult with parents regularly to seek constructive solutions to any differences in values.
- ⇒ Work to develop a trusting, genuine partnership between themselves, the parents and the child, with the child as the most important member.
- ⇒ Provide support for the family as a whole.
- ⇒ Encourage those parents who wish to become involved in the Centre's activities to do so.

**As early childhood educators and team members, the staff at this Centre will:**

- ⇒ Devote time and energy to developing teaching resources.
- ⇒ Meet regularly to share ideas, resources, grievances, information and interests.
- ⇒ Acknowledge, respect, value and actively utilise individual team member's skills.
- ⇒ Have an awareness of all tasks involved in the day to day efficient running of, and maintenance of, the Centre, its equipment, and storage areas. They will co-operate in the "fair sharing" of this workload.
- ⇒ Provide each other with professional and appropriate personal support.
- ⇒ Adhere to the regulations relating to Staff / Child ratios.

*Re-written April – August 2009*

*Adopted by the Board of Management 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2009*

*Reviewed November 2013*

## CODE OF CONDUCT

It is expected that all adults entering the Centre will, whilst in any part of the Centre environment, conduct themselves in a manner that meets the code of conduct. In modeling this behavior all adults will actively encourage children to conduct themselves in the same manner.

### The Code

The Code of Conduct requires that all who enter the Centre including its surrounding environment will:

- ⇒ Behave honestly and with integrity
- ⇒ Act with care and diligence and in a manner that ensures a safe and secure environment
- ⇒ Treat everyone with respect and courtesy and without harassment
- ⇒ Comply with Australian laws
- ⇒ Comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by someone in the Centre who has authority to give direction
- ⇒ Maintain appropriate confidentiality
- ⇒ Disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with their position in the Centre
- ⇒ Use the Centre's resources, equipment, property, and assets in a proper manner
- ⇒ Not provide false or misleading information in response to a request for information that is made for official purposes in connection with the Centre
- ⇒ Not make improper use of information in order to gain or seek to gain benefit or advantage.

Where it is alleged a person has contravened the Code a "Contravention of Code of Conduct" report shall be completed. The report will be referred to the Chairperson of the Board. Unless the report is considered to be frivolous or vexatious the Chairperson will:

- ⇒ Investigate it
- ⇒ Authorize another person/appropriate agency to investigate it.

If it is determined a contravention is valid, notification in writing will be handed to the person responsible for the contravention/s. Where it is not possible to be personally delivered by hand the notification will be sent by certified mail. After two contraventions of the Code the Board of Management will make a decision that may result in the person contravening the Code being excluded from the Centre.

If the contravention is a serious threat to the welfare of other persons at the Centre the person responsible for the contravention would be immediately excluded from the Centre environment. A letter to formalise and clarify the rationale of the decision will be handed or sent by certified mail to the excluded person.

*Sourced November 2013: [www.apsc.gov.au](http://www.apsc.gov.au) search Code of Conduct*

*Adapted and adopted by the CCCI Board of Management in November 2006*

*Reviewed November 2013*

## SUN & CLOTHING POLICY & PROCEDURE

All children and staff at the Centre need to dress in a way that ensures protection from the elements during outdoor time. A **“No adequate dress = No outdoor play/work”** policy applies all months of the year. The SunSmart policy applies whenever the UV Index levels reach 3 and above. In Victoria this generally applies from 1<sup>st</sup> September through to 30<sup>th</sup> April. Family and visitors are requested to follow the procedures of this policy when attending the Centre.

### Procedure

- ⇒ The UV exposure index is displayed each day on the office room notice board
- ⇒ All children and staff are to wear appropriate clothing and hats while outdoors. Sun protective clothing is essential from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 30<sup>th</sup> April as UV radiation levels are strongest at this time of year. During other months of the year staff are expected to use good judgement in assessing the situation on a daily basis and consider safe UV exposure.
- ⇒ The Centre will ensure there is an adequate supply of hats for every child and staff member. These hats will be selected as per the specifications of the current Sunsmart protective hats criteria.
- ⇒ The Centre shall maintain sufficient shaded areas in the outdoor playground.
- ⇒ Children will be encouraged to play in shaded areas of the playground.
- ⇒ When setting up the playground during the summer months, staff will ensure that equipment and play experiences are set up in shaded areas.
- ⇒ The Centre shall provide SPF 30+, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen, purchased from the Anti-Cancer Council, for both children and staff. Children over 3 years of age will be encouraged to apply their own sunscreen with staff supervision and the use of a full length mirror. Parents may wish to supply an alternative sunscreen if their child is sensitive to the one provided by the Centre.
- ⇒ Following the written parental consent/instructions on the child’s enrolment form staff will apply sunscreen to children 20 to 30 minutes before going outside which will be re-applied every 2 or 4 hours (dependant on the sunscreen used) when children are outdoors.
- ⇒ Babies under 12 months will be kept out of the direct sun when the UV index is above 3.
- ⇒ With written parental consent on the child’s enrolment form, children with naturally very dark skin (skin that rarely burns) are not required to wear sunscreen.
- ⇒ Outdoor play during peak daily UV radiation times (10am – 3pm EST and 11am – 4pm DEST) will be minimised
- ⇒ Learning about skin, healthy UV exposure and ways to protect skin from the sun will be incorporated into the children’s program. The importance of wearing hats, appropriate clothing and sunscreen and the **“No adequate dress = No outdoor play/work”** policy will be discussed with children.
- ⇒ Staff will act as role models by wearing hats and applying sunscreen to themselves.
- ⇒ The Centre will provide parents with information relating to sun protection, via the newsletter, notice board displays, and the Parent Resource Library.

- ⇒ Parents are asked to dress children in loose fitting clothing that protects as much of children's skin as possible. Shirts that cover the shoulders, have collars and sleeves that are at least elbow length and longer style shorts and skirts are most suitable for sun protection. Sunglasses that are close fitting, cover as much of the eye as possible and meet Australian standards 1067 (Sunglasses – Category 2, 3 or 4) are recommended – staff must put a name tag on these. Baseball caps are not accepted as adequate protection against the sun.
- ⇒ Staff and children will need to bring coats (or an extra layer of clothing), boots, and hats to wear outside during the winter months.
- ⇒ An outdoor curfew will be set during both the winter and summer months. This time will be continually assessed and changed by team leaders' and determined by the changing weather conditions.

In 2012 the Coburg Children's Centre celebrated 15 years of being a registered "Sun Smart Centre".

*Reviewed November 2013*

*November 2013 Sourced: [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au) → protecting others, in early childhood services*

**AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN’S EDUCATION AND CARE AUTHORITY (ACECQA)  
and the  
NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK (NQF)**

ACECQA is the national independent statutory authority responsible for providing leadership in promoting quality and continuous improvement in early childhood education and care (and school age care) in Australia.

The NQF was introduced by the Federal Government on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2012 replacing the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC).

As of the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2012 all early childhood education and care services – childcare, kindergartens, family day care, outside school hours care and vacation care – were required by the National Quality Framework (NQF) to have written their services “Quality Improvement Plan” (QIP).

The QIP is based on 7 Quality Areas; each area has up to 3 Standards and each Standard has up to 6 Elements which aim to put in place an ongoing process of self assessment and improvement. Services needed to prioritise which of these standards and/or elements they should work on to improve.

We receive and act on feedback from staff and parents on a daily basis and we needed both staff and parents input to develop our QIP. Staff completed a personal “Self Assessment” process with the educational leaders support.

Parents completed an assessment survey rating our Centre on each element and were asked to attend a whole staff/parent combined meeting to help us develop the QIP.

The following rating system has been used to assess each element:

<b>High priority</b>	This is not being done well at the Centre and definite improvement needs to happen – this is a high priority to be included in the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
<b>Medium priority</b>	This is being done reasonably well but could do with some improvement - this is a medium priority for the QIP.
<b>Low priority</b>	This is being done well and does not need to be included in the QIP at this time - it is a low priority
<b>Don't Know</b>	Not know – needs further information. A hard copy of the NQF explanatory guides for this element can be supplied or sourced from the <a href="http://www.acecqa.gov.au">www.acecqa.gov.au</a> or you can talk to co-ordinators
<b>Comments</b>	This is optional – there 58 elements in all and we are happy with a tick in a box but want to give parents the option of making a comment.

Collating the information resulted in the development of a “Statement of Strengths” and a Quality Improvement Plan which can be found on the hall table. We will follow this process again in 2013.

Sourced November 2013:

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

## LATE COLLECTION OF CHILDREN POLICY & PROCEDURE

Officially the Centre is open from 7:00am to 6:00pm. Staff are rostered on duty to 6:15pm to allow for end of day tasks and to be available for parents who may be delayed unexpectedly. Parents are asked to have their children collected no later than 6:00pm and are informed that continued contravention of this policy may result in them being requested and supported to make alternative childcare arrangements. Such a request must be approved by the Board of Management and is not to be discussed with parents without prior approval from the Board.

### PROCEDURE

If you are going to be later than 6pm when collecting your child please contact the Centre as soon as possible to let us know.

If a parent has not collected their child or contacted the Centre by 6:30pm staff will attempt to contact the parent(s). If the staff cannot contact the parent(s) they will attempt to contact one of the emergency persons nominated on the child's enrolment form and request that person collect the child.

If the emergency contact person is able to come to the Centre, staff should place a sign on the front gate for the parents, explaining who has collected the child from the Centre, the time the child was collected, and information relating to where the child has been taken. This information is to be general and not contravene the Privacy Act e.g. "Sue collected Nathan at \*\* (time) and he is at her (or persons name) house.

Staff on duty must:

1. Inform the Co-ordinator or a Board member of their intention to implement this action.
2. Delegate to them the responsibility of continuing to attempt to contact the parents every hour until it is confirmed the child has been collected by the parent or other authorised person.
3. Give them the names and telephone numbers of all authorised person to collect the child as per the enrolment form.

If this task is being allocated to a Board member the Centre Co-ordinator's or assistant Co-ordinator's personal telephone numbers must also be provided.

If, after 6:30pm, staff are unable to contact a parent or an emergency contact person, the staff on duty should inform the Co-ordinator or a Board member of the situation. After consultation, an appropriate course of action will be planned. The well being, safety and reassurance of the child will be paramount in this planning process and the primary objective of any action taken.

*Reviewed: November 2013*

## FEES POLICY & PROCEDURE

The Centre is a not for profit service and reliant on its cash flow to continue to operate. Fees must not be more than two weeks in arrears unless a previous arrangement for payment has been made with the co-ordinator.

Fees are reviewed and set annually by the Board of Management. The maximum fee is set according to the annual break-even operational budget approved by the Board of Management.

The individual childcare fee for each family will be either:

- a) The maximum fee, or
- b) Calculated according to family income as per Centrelink assessment advice.

### PROCEDURE

1. Two weeks notice must be given when leaving the Centre, or fees for payment in lieu will be required.
2. In case of fees being more than two weeks in arrears and no arrangements have been made with the co-ordinator parents will be notified in writing. After a period of one week, if fees have not been paid a final notice giving a further seven days to pay will be sent. If fees are not paid the Co-ordinator shall consult with the Treasurer of the Board of Management to re-coup lapsed fees and assess the viability of continuing to provide a childcare service for the family.
3. The Board will pursue all outstanding debts regardless of the amount. The terms of trading are that all costs associated with debt recovery, including solicitors fees, will be met by the debtor.
4. Absences due to a death or illness in the family may be able to be covered by Special Childcare Benefit and families are encouraged to discuss this with the Centre coordinator.
5. All other categories of absences from the Centre from day one to four weeks must be paid for. After four weeks – two options are available:

*Option 1:* If families want to retain their childcare position they must continue to pay as usual

*Option 2:* Families may forfeit their childcare place giving two weeks notice or payment of fees in lieu of notice and place their name on the waiting list for future care.

Extenuating circumstances can be presented to the Board of Management and will be reviewed on a case by case basis by a minimum of two nominated representatives of the Board.

In all instances the definition of family is as follows:

1. A spouse, a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling.
2. A child, parent, grandparent or sibling of a spouse.
3. A spouse includes a former spouse, a de facto spouse, or a former de facto spouse. A de facto spouse means persons who live on a genuine domestic basis and are not legally married – this includes same sex couples.

*Reviewed November 2013*

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## NUTRITION PHILOSOPHY & POLICY

*Sharing food together is an important part of our day.  
We enjoy healthy, fresh seasonal food.*

### GOALS

The Centre provides childcare for up to 11 hours per day. In recognition that many of the children spend over eight hours a day in care and therefore must have two thirds of their daily nutritional needs met, our goals are for children to:

- ⇒ Enjoy their meals and snacks, and the positive socialisation associated with these routines
- ⇒ Experience healthy eating and the benefits of making good food choices
- ⇒ Learn the connection between nutrition and health, including drinking adequate quantities of fresh water
- ⇒ Experience meals from a broad range of cultures
- ⇒ Develop a positive relationship with and understand the value of food
- ⇒ Learn the role hygiene has at mealtimes.

### STRATEGIES

To achieve these goals the staff at this Centre will implement the following:

- ⇒ Give children the message that all food provided at the Centre has equal value and will not be used as a reward, bribe or reprimand.
- ⇒ Support parents wishing to breastfeed their children while in childcare.
- ⇒ Present food in an appealing way offering a range of colours, textures, flavours and diversity that gives children a variety of choice, and is age/stage appropriate.
- ⇒ Recognise and respect the factors that influence children's food choices and values e.g. religious beliefs, past experiences, cultural differences etc.
- ⇒ Cater for children with specific dietary requirements.
- ⇒ Create opportunities for children to participate in food preparation, and encourage the value of food as a social activity.
  
- ⇒ Staff will model and encourage children to try different foods, develop an understanding of appropriate serving sizes and the implications of waste.

⇒ Consistently emphasise to children the need and reasons for hygiene, dental practice and care by encouraging them to:

- wash their hands before and after eating
- eat food from their own plate rather than from other peoples' plates
- throw away food that has been on the floor,
- finish each meal with a piece of fruit,
- drink water after eating as an alternative to brushing their teeth.

### Menu Development

The Centre has six week seasonal menus repeated twice for Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring. Menus are displayed in the foyer with a peg doll indicating which week is current. Recipes are available.

Menu development will meet the goals set out in the Nutrition Checklist for Planning Long Day Care Menus (produced by the SA Child Care Nutrition Partnership based on the checklist developed by Nutrition Department of Central Coast Area Health Service in NSW).

We aim to purchase fruit and vegetables according to their season, and as local to Melbourne as practicable. This is fresh and tasty and:

1. encourages children to understand the seasonal nature of food
2. reduces the carbon footprint of the food through reducing the need to transport long distances
3. requires less energy, water and chemicals to produce
4. is economically and environmentally sound practice.

We aim never to purchase fruit or vegetables grown outside Australia. All meat is halal, no pork products are used, eggs are free range, chicken is processed free of chemicals, genetically modified and processed foods are avoided wherever possible.

In consultation with parents and the Board the seasonal menu will be reviewed annually, taking into consideration popularity with the children, practicality and nutritional guidelines.

All food/meals are prepared in line with the Food Safety Plan requirements of HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point). Each year the Centre undergoes an independent audit in line with the Victorian Food Act 1984 to be eligible to obtain a "Certificate of Renewal of Registration of Food Premises".

Refer also to Centre information regarding Birthdays and Allergies, Anaphylaxis and Asthma Management which provides further details and procedures to follow when bringing food to the Centre.

[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)

[www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

[www.echildcare.com.au/resources/nutrition-checklist.pdf](http://www.echildcare.com.au/resources/nutrition-checklist.pdf)

*Reviewed November 2013*

*Sourced November 2013*

## **MEDICATION POLICY & PROCEDURE**

Parents and staff have important responsibilities to meet in administering medication to children. In addition to recording daily medication requirements, it is a parent's responsibility to verbally inform staff on arrival that their child requires medication during the day. Parents must be aware that staff will adhere to the following:

- ⇒ Non-prescription medication will only be administered according to the dosage direction on the label of the bottle, which must be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- ⇒ Prescribed medication will only be given if the label has the child's name printed on it, and staff will only administer the dosage prescribed on the label.
- ⇒ The Centre staff will not administer the first dose of any medication to a child in case the child has an allergic reaction.
- ⇒ Medication that is out of date cannot be administered.

### **PROCEDURE**

#### Staff Responsibilities

Staff on early shift must ensure all messages relating to children's medication are passed onto the appropriate staff members.

Staff must ensure all medication is stored in the locked medication cabinet in each room or the refrigerator in the kitchen (a non-child area) if required.

Before administering any medication staff need to check with other staff members whether the medication has been administered.

Two staff members need to check that the medication to be administered corresponds with the information recorded in the medication book i.e. the child's name, the date and name of the medication, the dose to be given, and the time to be administered.

Once the medication has been administered both staff members need to complete and sign the appropriate section of the medication book.

Staff must remind parents to collect their child's medication at the end of the day.

### Parent Responsibilities

Staff are to guide parents in meeting the following requirements:

- ⇒ On arrival parents must hand any medication to the staff member on duty, and explain what the medication is, the dose and time it is to be administered.
- ⇒ Parent must inform staff if their child had any medication before coming to the Centre.
- ⇒ Parent must complete the relevant sections of the medication book, stating the child's name, the date and name of the medication, the dose and time the medication is to be administered. Parent must sign this entry.
- ⇒ Parent to complete a separate line for each medication or dose that is to be administered during the day.
- ⇒ If medication is written in "as required" parent must include a descriptive reason as to the circumstances under which medication should be administered.

It is parents responsibility to collect their child's medication at the end of the day, and to ensure that they are taking the correct medication home.

*Reviewed November 2013*

**ACCIDENT PROCEDURE**

If a child has an accident while attending the Centre and staff are concerned about the well being of the child, the child's parents will be notified.

**PROCEDURE**

The senior staff member directly responsible for the child will assess the situation and discuss the child's injury with the Co-ordinator/Acting Co-ordinator.

Staff will carry out any basic first aid procedures and continue to monitor the child's general condition.

If staff have heightened concerns about the child, they will contact the child's parents and outline the nature of the injury and any treatment that has been given. A decision regarding further action will be made in consultation with parents.

Staff have a legal obligation to record all information in the accident book.

Parents have an obligation to sign all accident reports as per the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012

*Reviewed: November 2013*

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In the event of a child becoming seriously ill or sustaining a serious injury while attending the Centre, the following procedure will be followed.

### PROCEDURE

- ⇒ The senior staff member directly responsible for the child will immediately alert the Centre Co-ordinator/ Acting Co-ordinator of the details of the situation to decide on a course of action.
- ⇒ If the situation is determined to be critical an ambulance must be called on 000.
- ⇒ If the child needs to be taken to hospital by ambulance, the staff member directly responsible for the child and/or the Centre Co-ordinator will accompany the child. In either case the child's enrolment form contact details and a mobile telephone will be taken by the staff member accompanying the child.
- ⇒ If time permits parents will be contacted first and advised of the situation and action being taken. In extreme emergencies parents will be contacted after emergency medical treatment has been arranged.
- ⇒ If parents are not contactable – the emergency contacts named on the child's enrolment form will be contacted and asked to help in contacting/locating the parents.
- ⇒ If staff deem the situation to be not critical and are unclear about the level of seriousness of the situation at a minimum Nurse on Call must be contacted on 1300 60 60 24 (as per the information on all the Centres medication and first aid cabinets) and follow the guidance given.
- ⇒ Staff will record details of the situation in the accident/illness book. Details must include action taken, time of incident, date, child's name, and staff member's signature.
- ⇒ If the Co-ordinator is not present at the Centre it is the Acting Co-ordinator or staff member's responsibility to report the incident to the Co-ordinator as soon as possible. In the event that the Co-ordinator cannot be contacted the Chairperson of the Board of Management may be contacted.
- ⇒ In the event of serious illness or accident, it is the Co-ordinator's responsibility to forward a full written report detailing the incident to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development as per the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012. Parents will be given a copy of this report.

*Reviewed November 2013*

## **CHILDREN WHO BECOME ILL DURING THE DAY POLICY & PROCEDURE**

To the best of our ability we will endeavour to care for children who are unwell due to illness for prolonged periods. When children have a cold or teething or are just generally unwell, staff will plan appropriately for their needs e.g. sitting quietly, sleeping etc. If a child's condition worsens throughout the day staff will follow this procedure.

### **PROCEDURE**

- ⇒ If a child becomes ill while attending the Centre, the senior staff member caring for the child will discuss the child's condition with the Co-ordinator and plan a course of action.
- ⇒ Depending on how ill the child is, the Co-ordinator or the staff member caring for the child may contact the child's parents, explain the symptoms, discuss possible options, and together with parents decide further action. This may include a decision that the child is too ill to stay at the Centre and a request for parents to make arrangements to collect the child as soon as possible.
- ⇒ After consultation with parents, staff will administer any medication required, in accordance with the Centre's medication policy or at the specific instruction of the parents.
- ⇒ The child will be made as comfortable as possible in part of the room that allows full supervision but in a separate/quiet area apart from the other children (e.g. book corner). The child may be cared for in the office where signs and symptoms can be closely monitored until parents arrive.
- ⇒ All information will be recorded in the illness and accident section of the medication book. On arrival parents will be required to sign the illness and accident book and/or the medication book if necessary.
- ⇒ If the illness is deemed to be possibly contagious an entry in the illness log in the office will be made.
- ⇒ In the event that a parent cannot be contacted, the staff may then contact one of the child's emergency contacts (as nominated on their enrolment form) and outline the situation. The emergency contact person does not have the authority to give permission for medication to be administered to the child.
- ⇒ If required, the staff will follow the Emergency Procedure.
- ⇒ If a child has an infectious illness that is not included in the National Health and Medical Research Council "Recommended Minimum Exclusion Periods for Infectious Conditions for Schools, Pre schools, and Child Care Centres" Schedule, the Co-ordinator may require a doctor's clearance stating that the child is not infectious.

*Reviewed and Sourced November 2013: Source*

[http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files\\_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf)

## EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE OR ILLNESS PROCEDURE

If a child has an infectious disease or illness e.g. chicken pox or conjunctivitis they must be excluded from the Centre as per the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 for the “Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children’s Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts” Schedule. It is parent’s responsibility to notify the Centre if their child has contracted an infectious disease or illness.

Children will be excluded from the Centre if they have an infectious disease or illness.

### PROCEDURE

- ⇒ Exclusion guidelines are based on the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 for the “Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children’s Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts” Schedule. Please refer to Appendix XIII.
- ⇒ It is the parents’ responsibility to notify the Centre that their child has contracted an infectious disease or illness.
- ⇒ It is the Co-ordinator’s responsibility to inform all parents and staff of a reported infectious disease or illness. A notice will be placed at the front entrance of the Centre.
- ⇒ Children may return to the Centre after the appropriate exclusion period has passed, as stated in the Schedule. The Co-ordinator may require a doctor’s clearance.
- ⇒ It is the Co-ordinator and staffs’ responsibility to ensure that parents are given correct and up-to-date information on infectious diseases and illnesses - this is available from the office and in the Parent Resource Library.
- ⇒ It is the Co-ordinators responsibility to contact the Communicable Diseases Control Unit of the Department of Human Services as per the legislation regarding infectious diseases notification requirements.

*Sourced November 2013.*

*Sources:*

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf>

<http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/guidelines/school-exclusion-table.asp>

**NATIONAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL EXCLUSION SCHEDULE**

See <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf>

*Sourced November 2013.*

## IMMUNISATION POLICY & PROCEDURE

When an infectious disease is present or suspected at the Centre or at home and a child or staff member has not been immunised against this disease as per the National Immunisation Program Schedule then children or staff that have not been immunised will need to be excluded temporarily from the Centre.

### PROCEDURE

- ⇒ On enrolment parents are required to complete their child's immunisation record as part of the enrolment forms. It is parents' responsibility to inform the Centre of their child's immunisation status.
- ⇒ On commencement of employment staff are given information from the Department of Health about immunisation for people who work with children.
- ⇒ Staff are responsible to keep their immunisation status up-to-date.
- ⇒ It is parents' responsibility to make sure that their child's immunisation records are kept up-to-date and parents will be formally requested to update records in writing annually.
- ⇒ It is the Centre's responsibility to inform parents and staff on matters relating to immunisation.
- ⇒ It is the Co-ordinator's responsibility to inform staff and parents of children who are not immunised of any reported cases of childhood diseases at the Centre. Children and staff who are not immunised will be excluded from the Centre in accordance with the Department of Health and Ageing Immunise Program guidelines.
- ⇒ Please refer to Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 for the "Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts" Schedule for cases of, and contact with infectious diseases, for the required exclusion period.
- ⇒ Please refer to the attached Victorian Department of Health Immunise Program for details of immunisation requirements.
- ⇒ Further information about immunisation is available from the Health Department of the Moreland City Council (ph 03 9240 1111) and at the following websites or via the office staff.

*Sourced November 2013*

[www.moreland.vic.gov.au](http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au) go to Health + Safety → Immunisation  
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf>  
[www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)

**VACCINATION SCHEDULE**  
**National Immunisation Program Schedule**

(Valid from Oct 2013)

Information Sourced: [www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Vaccine</i>
Birth	Hepatitis B
2 Months	Hepatitis B, diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (whooping cough), Haemophilus influenzae type b, inactivated poliomyelitis (polio) (hepB-DTPa-Hib-IPV) Pneumococcal conjugate (13vPCV) Rotavirus
4 Months	Hepatitis B, diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (whooping cough), Haemophilus influenzae type b, inactivated poliomyelitis (polio) (hepB-DTPa-Hib-IPV) Pneumococcal conjugate (13vPCV) Rotavirus
6 Months (note – increased risk category)	Hepatitis B, diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (whooping cough), Haemophilus influenzae type b, inactivated poliomyelitis (polio) (hepB-DTPa-Hib-IPV) Pneumococcal conjugate (13vPCV) Rotavirus b
12 Months (note – increased risk category)	Haemophilus influenzae type b and Meningococcal C (Hib-MenC) Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR)
18 Months	Measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox) (MMRV)
4 Years (note – increased risk category)	Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (whooping cough) and inactivated poliomyelitis (polio) (DTPa-IPV) Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) (to be given only if MMRV vaccine was not given at 18 months)

**NATIONAL IMMUNISATION PROGRAM SCHEDULE**  
**As at October 2013**

**Immunisation for special groups**

**6 months and over – at risk individuals**

Influenza (people with medical conditions placing them at risk of serious complications of influenza)

**12 months – at risk individuals**

Pneumococcal conjugate (13vPCV)<sup>fg</sup>

Hepatitis B (hepB)<sup>h</sup>

**12-24 months**

Hepatitis A (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in high risk areas)<sup>i</sup>

Pneumococcal (23vPPV) (18 – 24 months) or Pneumococcal (13vPCV) (12 – 18 months from 1 October 2012) (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in high risk areas)<sup>j</sup>

Hepatitis A (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in high risk areas)

**4 years – at risk individuals**

Pneumococcal polysaccharide (23vPPV)<sup>f</sup>

**Footnotes to the National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule**

- a. Hepatitis B vaccine: should be given to all infants as soon as practicable after birth. The greatest benefit is if given within 24 hours, and must be given within 7 days.
- b. Rotavirus vaccine: third dose of vaccine is dependent on vaccine brand used. Contact your State or Territory Health Department for details.
- c. Hepatitis B and Varicella vaccine: contact your State or Territory Health Department for details on the school grade eligible for vaccination.
- d. HPV vaccine: is for all adolescents aged between 12 and 13 years. A catch-up program for males aged between 14 and 15 years is available until December 2014. Contact your State or Territory Health Department for details on the school grade eligible for vaccination.
- e. Pneumococcal vaccine:
  - i. Medically at risk children require: a fourth dose of 13vPCV at 12 months of age; and a booster dose of 23vPPV at 4 years of age.
  - ii. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children require: a fourth dose of pneumococcal vaccine (13vPCV) at 12-18 months of age for children living in high risk areas (Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia). Contact your State or Territory Health Department for details.
- f. Hepatitis A vaccine: two doses of Hepatitis A vaccine for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children living in high risk areas (Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia). Contact your State or Territory Health Department for details.

COBURG CHILDRENS CENTRE  
**EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN**

1. Any staff member who deems it necessary to evacuate the Centre will activate the alarm by blowing the umpire's whistle.
2. The Chief Warden is the person in charge of the office.
3. If office is unattended the person who raised the alarm will be responsible for the evacuation, and wear the white hat marked "Chief Warden" and carry out the Chief Warden Duties.
4. Area Wardens wear yellow hats and are responsible for:
  - a) evacuating children to assembly area and
  - b) conducting a roll call.
5. Chief Warden wears a white hat and is responsible for:
  - a) overall control of the emergency/evacuation procedure
  - b) determining and communicating the evacuation route and assembly area
  - c) taking the evacuation trolley to the assembly area
  - d) determining and authorizing action plans to locate missing persons

**The evacuation procedure is practiced every month. A roster is drawn up annually and displayed on the staff room notice board ensuring every staff member has the opportunity to "call" an evacuation.**

*Reviewed November 2013*

## GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

The Centre management uses open communication and discussion within a basic set of guidelines to provide a systematic approach to resolving concerns, grievances and issues.

⇒ The Board of Management's decision is final. However it may recommend a further or ongoing process or procedure in relation to any particular matter.

### Procedures

⇒ Grievances in relation to the delivery of the service or persons connected to the service are initially to be directed to the person concerned, or the Centre Co-ordinator.

⇒ The parties will discuss the grievance in an effort to resolve it.

⇒ If resolution cannot be reached within four weeks and the person making the complaint continues to feel dissatisfied, they must inform the person/Centre Co-ordinator of this and their intention to pursue the matter further.

⇒ The matter may then be taken to the Chairperson of the Board of Management. If the Chairperson has a conflict of interest or is compromised in any way in dealing with the situation a nominated representative will be appointed to manage the grievance process.

⇒ The parties will meet in a further effort to resolve the grievance.

⇒ The Chairperson (or nominated representative) may decide to raise the matter with the Board for discussion/resolution.

Persons with a grievance may contact the regional Authorised Officer from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development should they feel that their grievances have not been adequately addressed or resolved.

***The telephone number for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development - Quality Assessment and Regulation Division for this region is 9412-2729 or 1300 307 415.***

*Reviewed November 2013*

### **MANDATORY REPORTING PROCEDURE**

Protecting children is everyone's business. Early Childhood Professionals have a significant role within the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020* to report suspected cases of child abuse. Therefore Centre staff have a legal, as well as moral, obligation to report suspected child abuse. Senior staff have basic training in the area of recognising the behavioural indicators of child abuse. In responding to concerns about a child's wellbeing a referral may be made to the "Child First" program or to the Department of Human Services Child Protection Unit Victoria.

It is the Co-ordinators responsibility to ensure the parents and children utilising the centre have their rights upheld, respected and supported - this particularly applies when adults are experiencing difficulties in their role as parents. The following procedures are set in place to ensure that:

- ⇒ Parents are informed of any concerns staff have about the welfare of their children prior to a report being made.
- ⇒ The rights of the child are upheld.
- ⇒ The rights of the parents are upheld.
- ⇒ Staff concerns are addressed in a planned and objective manner.
- ⇒ The law is adhered to.

### **PROCEDURES**

Instances of suspected abuse are to be reported to the Co-ordinator.

The Co-ordinator will consult with the family concerned before taking any action.

In conjunction with the family, the Co-ordinator will help to arrange appropriate family support.

The Co-ordinator will clearly outline to the family the course of action, if any, she is going to take.

The Co-ordinator may take action prior to consulting parents only if it is believed the child is at extreme and immediate risk and in need of urgent protection.

*Sources:*

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/childprotection/childprotection.htm>

*Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people – Protocol*

*Reviewed November 2013*

*Updated November 2013*